INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS

Purpose: This section explains when a client must have an interview for benefits and when we can use an alternate type of interview (other than an in-office interview). This section also explains the department's requirements to screen for family violence and what referrals to make for clients who may be affected by family violence.

WAC 388-452-0005 Do I have to be interviewed in order to get benefits?

(1) You will have only one interview when you apply for or have a review for cash or food assistance or both.

(2) You are not required to attend an interview when your application or review is just for medical benefits. If we deny your application for cash or food assistance because you did not appear for an interview, we will continue to process your request for medical benefits:

(a) For a pregnant woman;

(b) For a child under the age of nineteen;

(c) For a family with children under the age of nineteen; or

(d) When we have enough information to determine if you are eligible or can get the information by mail.

(3) You or another person who can give information about your assistance unit must attend the interview. You may bring another person to the interview. You may choose another person to go to the interview for you when:

(a) You cannot come to the local office for us to decide if you are eligible for cash assistance; or

(b) You have an authorized representative as described in WAC 388-460-0005 for food assistance.

(4) We usually have interviews at the local office. You can have a scheduled telephone interview or an interview in your home if attending an interview at the local office causes a hardship for you or your representative.

Examples of hardships include:

(a) If your entire assistance unit is elderly or mentally or physically disabled.

(b) If you live in a remote area or have transportation problems;

(c) Severe weather;

(d) If someone in your assistance unit (AU) is ill, or you have to stay home to care for an AU member;

(e) Your work or training hours make it difficult to come into the office during regular business hours;

(f) Someone in your AU is affected by family violence such as physical or mental abuse, harassment, or stalking by the abuser; or

(g) Any other problem which would make it difficult for you to come into the office for an interview.

WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

Interpreter Services

Use certified interpreters when the client's requested language is Spanish, Vietnamese, Laotian, Chinese, Cambodian, Russian, or Korean.

1. Provide an interpreter for interviews and telephone services without a significant delay in services. If a client speaks or communicates in a language not listed above, arrange with your LEP coordinator an interpreter for the client's language before the scheduled interview.

2. Friends and family members may not be appropriate interpreters because they could have an interest in the outcome of the interview. The interview could also involve sensitive issues such as family violence.

The Interview

1. Review the DSHS 14-113(X), "Your Rights and Responsibilities" with the client at

the beginning of the interview. See **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES** for procedures.

2. Review all completed forms with the client to ensure:

   a. All portions of the form are complete and correct;

   b. Unclear, incomplete, or inconsistent information is resolved with the client; and

   c. All mandatory verification factors are verified. See **VERIFICATION**.

3. See **APPLICATIONS** - Information Needed to Determine Eligibility to determine if all necessary forms are completed.

TANF Family Violence Screening

NOTE: WAC and additional information about Family Violence screening is found at the end of this section.

1. Review the application or eligibility review form to determine if the client claims “good cause” for not helping the Division of Child Support (DCS) establish paternity and collect child support. This may be the first sign that family violence is an issue.

2. Review with the client the family violence amendment, called the **Client Notice**.

3. Explain WorkFirst work activities and eligibility requirements.

4. Tell the client about their responsibility to cooperate and to receive referrals, including the right to apply for referrals at any time they fear abuse will occur.

5. After the client receives and understands the notice, screen the client for family violence using the DSHS Family Violence Screening Tool.

6. Tell the client that they only need to answer “yes”, “no” or “no comment” to each question. The client does not have to explain their answers.

7. If the client answers “no” to all five questions determine appropriate work activity.

8. If the client answers “yes” to any of the questions, provide them with referral

information to local resources and determine an appropriate work activity. Referrals may include one or more of the following:

a. Shelters for battered individuals;

b. Medical services;

c. Family and domestic violence hot lines;

d. Emergency help for individuals fleeing family violence;

e. Legal counseling and advocacy, including initiation of legal proceedings;

f. Mental health care, counseling and support groups;

g. Other available services.

Approval for Alternate Type of Interview

1. For NSA (Necessary Supplemental Accommodation) clients, waive the in-office interview if the client meets any of the hardship criteria.

2. If you believe an in-office interview is necessary because you suspect the client is committing fraud, waive the interview if the client meets any of the hardship criteria and submit a FRED or a VOCS. See **FRAUD**.

3. Telephone or home interviews should be scheduled in advance with the household.

4. Document in the electronic file why the in-office interview was waived.

WAC 388-452-0010 What does the family violence amendment mean for TANF/SFA recipients?

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), also known as the Welfare Reform Act, gave every state the option to have a program to address issues of family violence for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) and state family assistance (SFA) recipients.

(1) For TANF/SFA, it is family violence when a recipient, or family member or household member has been subjected by another family member or household member as defined in RCW 26.50.010(2) to one of the following:

  (a) Physical acts that resulted in, or threatened to result in, physical injury;

  (b) Sexual abuse;

  (c) Sexual activity involving a dependent child;

  (d) Being forced as the caretaker relative or a dependent child to engage in nonconsensual sexual acts or activities;

  (e) Threats of or attempts at, physical sexual abuse;

  (f) Mental abuse;

  (g) Neglect or deprivation of medical care; or

  (h) Stalking.

(2) DSHS shall:

  (a) Screen and identify TANF/SFA recipients for a history of family violence;

  (b) Notify TANF/SFA recipients about the family violence amendment both verbally and in writing;

  (c) Maintain confidentiality as stated in RCW 74.04.060;

  (d) Offer referral to social services or other resources for clients who meet the criteria in subsection (1) of this section;

  (e) Waive WorkFirst requirements that unfairly penalize victims of family violence, would make it more difficult to escape family violence or place victims at further risk. Requirements to be waived may include:

(i) Time limits for TANF/SFA recipients, for as long as necessary (after fifty-two months of receiving TANF/SFA);

(ii) Cooperation with the division of child support.

(f) Develop specialized work activities for instances where participation in regular work activities would place the recipient at further risk of family violence.

CLARIFYING INFORMATION

WAC 388-452-0010 applies **only** to TANF/SFA clients.

1. **Additional requirements for persons fleeing domestic abuse:**

   Additional requirements may be available for persons currently receiving TANF or Refugee Cash Assistance fleeing domestic abuse. See **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE** for rules and procedures.

2. **Family violence may be a barrier for work:**

   Family violence victims face several hurdles in successfully moving from welfare to work because:

   a. The physical and emotional effects of past or present abuse may hinder job performance or work search.

   b. The abuser may try to sabotage the victims' education, training and employment to keep them dependent upon the abuser.

   c. The abuser may threaten the safety of the client's children or family members.

   d. The demands of court intervention, criminal prosecution, safety planning, physical and mental recovery, or counseling may interfere with work, education or training.

   e. The individual may need to move or disrupt work to escape a violent living arrangement.

3. **Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP):**

Since the degree of family violence varies greatly, the intent of this section is to help the worker determine an IRP. The following levels may help to determine whether or not a deferral and/or waiver is necessary:

a. *Level 1* - This group identifies victims of family violence who do not want or need any special program waivers or referrals.

b. *Level 2* - This group identifies victims of family violence who want supportive services, but do not need deferrals and/or waivers from work requirements.

c. *Level 3* - This group identifies victims of family violence who need referrals to local resources and deferrals and/or waivers to gain stability before actively seeking employment.

See the WorkFirst Implementation Handbook for a list of countable work activities.

WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Screen all TANF clients at the initial application interview and each eligibility review for circumstances of family violence.

2. Provide referral information to participants in need of counseling and support services.

3. Delay work search activities when participation would:

   a. Make it more difficult for the participant to escape family violence.

   b. Penalize participants who have been or are at risk of becoming victims of family violence, or who are at further risk of abuse.

4. You may waive the following:

   a. Time limits on receipt of TANF, after the client has received TANF for 52 months.

   b. Paternity and child support cooperation requirements.

c. Other WorkFirst requirements which unfairly penalize victims or make it more difficult to escape family violence.

5. Keep information about victims of family violence confidential as required by RCW 74.04.060 and chapter 388-01 WAC.

EXCEPTION: You must report incidents of child abuse or neglect to the proper law enforcement agency. This includes child rape, child molestation and sexual misconduct with a minor. RCW 26.44.030(4) provides these guidelines.

6. Provide notification of the family violence amendment, called the **Client Notice**, both orally and in writing to all TANF clients. Case Managers will provide the client with a copy of the **Client Notice** at the initial application interview and at each eligibility review. The notice tells the client that they must participate in the WorkFirst program. It also tells them that they may tell the department about problems with family violence at any time.

7. Accept allegations of family violence by a victim as enough evidence to substantiate the claim of violence. This applies as long as the department has no independent basis to find the client not credible. Evidence of family violence may also include any of the following sources:

   a. Police, government agency, or court records.

   b. Documentation from a source who the applicant or recipient has sought aid from in dealing with family violence.

   c. Statement from any other individual who has knowledge of the circumstances which provide the basis for the claim.

   d. Physical evidence of violence against a family member.

   e. Other evidence that may help identify a victim of family violence.

8. Show sensitivity in handling situations involving a victim or potential victim of family violence.

9. Provide an environment in which the family can disclose family violence. This includes interviewing the client alone whenever possible.

ACES PROCEDURES

There are two procedures addressed in this section:

- Actions taken during the interview
- Scheduling in ACES

ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE INTERVIEW

During Interview, there are three actions that are generally taken on each case:

- Entering data
- Requesting verification
- Making referrals.

1. **Entering data:**

   This is the process of updating ACES to show the current circumstances of the household. For specific actions taken during the application process, see **APPLICATIONS**. For specific actions taken during the Eligibility Review/Re-certification, See **ELIGIBILITY REVIEWS AND RECERTIFICATIONS**.

2. **Requesting verification:**

   There are two ways to use ACES to request verification:

   a. After entering all data, if any verification is missing ACES automatically displays the (VERF) screen for each AU. This screen lists the verification missing for each client. Press <F20> to print the Notice of Missing Verification locally or, press <F19> to print the notice in overnight batch. Note: This notice does not list specific examples of verification that can be used.

   b. Generate a letter. See **NOTICES and LETTERS** for specifics on creating a letter.

3. **Making referrals:**

   ACES can also assist you in making referrals. Referral letters are created according to the procedures used in creating all letters in ACES. See **NOTICES**

and LETTERS. The generic referral/communication letter is the R01G. There are also specific letters for referring clients to other departments, such as ADATSA Assessment referrals, FRED Referrals, and OSI referrals.

SCHEDULING IN ACES

There are three kinds of scheduling processes in ACES:

- Scheduling worker's calendars
- Scheduling and notifying the client of an interview
- Rescheduling a client interview

Scheduling Worker’s Calendars

The Scheduling component of ACES is an electronic calendar. It is used to assist workers in personal time management and in scheduling AU/Client interviews. There are four basic functions: inquiry, update, schedule, and reschedule.

1. **Inquiry:**

   This function is used to inquire on an individual worker's schedule or the schedule for all workers in a unit.

2. **Worker schedule:**

   a. From the (WMEN), select [C]. <TRANSMIT>

   b. (CMEN) displays. Select [A] and enter the date of inquiry and the User ID of the worker. <TRANSMIT>

   c. The first screen of the (SCHD) displays the worker's schedule from 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM on the date requested.

   d. <TRANSMIT> displays 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM. Press <F7> to return to the first screen.

   e. Press <F13> to go ahead one day, <F14> to go back one day.

   f. Enter an [I] in the Select (S) field and <TRANSMIT> to inquire on an appointment scheduled. This brings up the data screens for the AU listed.

3. **Unit schedule:**

   a. From the (CMEN), select [C] and enter the date of inquiry, the CSO number, the Unit type, and the Unit number. Press <F1> for the appropriate valid values of CSO number and Unit type. <TRANSMIT>

   b. The first screen of the (SCHS) displays the unit's schedule from 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM on the date requested.

   c. Press <F13> to go ahead one day, <F14> to go back one day.

   d. If [MORE] appears in the upper left-hand corner, press <F15> to reveal schedules for additional workers in the unit.

   e. Press <F16> to return to the previous page(s).

   NOTE: You cannot update any fields on this screen.

4. **Update (Personal schedule):**

   This function is for personal time management. Use this to schedule any non-client activities (commonly referred to as "blocking out your schedule").

   a. From the (CMEN), select [B] and enter the date to update and User ID. <TRANSMIT>

   b. The first screen of the (SCHD) screens displays.

   c. Enter the appointment type in the (Appt) field and any additional information needed in the (Remarks) field for each time slot you wish to update. Press <F1> for the appropriate valid values of appointment types.

   d. If the activity is to continue beyond 2 hour, enter [C] for Copy in the (Appt) field of the appropriate time slots below.

   e. To change any activities, type over the information in the fields.

   f. To delete any activities, place the cursor in the first space of the field and press <END>.

   g. Enter [I] in the (S) field to inquire on an AU/Client appointment.

<TRANSMIT>

h. Enter [U] in the (S) field to go to the (MISC) screen of the AU/Client Scheduling function.

NOTE: If an Eligibility Review is currently due, entering [U] will take you directly to Initiate Review and allow you to update the case to process the review.

i. To advance to the second screen of the (SCHD), press <TRANSMIT>; to advance to the next day, press <F13>.

Scheduling and Notifying the Client of the Interview

There are two screens on which you can schedule client appointments: the (SCDI) and the (MISC).

1. **(SCDI) screen:**

This screen is accessed through Screening. It is the final screen of the process.

a. On the (SCDI) enter the Unit Type and Unit Number. Press <F1> for the appropriate valid values of unit type.

b. Complete the (Appt Date) field with the date you wish to interview the client.

c. Press <F14> to view the (SCHS) screen and check the schedule.

d. Press <F3> to return to the (SCDI).

e. Enter the User ID and complete the appointment start and end times.

f. In the (L Name/Appt Remarks) field enter information that may assist with scheduling.

g. Press <F22> to print the appointment notice locally or <TRANSMIT> to print through overnight batch.

2. **(MISC) Screen**

a. Access the (MISC) screen during the data collection sequences of Interview, Processing, or Interim/Historical change. These functions are accessed from the AMEN. The function you use depends on the status of the case you which to schedule.

b. On the (MISC), press <F14> to view the (SCHS) and determine the next available appointment.

NOTE: Check the Unit Number displayed. This shows the CSO number, unit type, and unit number. If the number shown is not the correct listing for the unit you are trying to check, you will not be able to access the correct unit's schedule. You will have to <F3> out of the case and check the schedule through the CMEN.

c. Press <F3> to return to the (MISC) screen.

d. Enter the appointment date, User ID, begin and end times, and any other information that may assist you. <TRANSMIT>

Rescheduling a Client Interview

When an appointment is scheduled for an AU, the appointment is also scheduled for related active AUs. All client appointments are rescheduled through the (MISC) screen. There are three ways to access the (MISC) screen to reschedule:

1. Access the (MISC) screen directly.

2. Reschedule the appointment through the (CMEN).

a. From the (CMEN), select [B] and enter the User ID and the day you wish to update. <TRANSMIT>

b. (SCHD) displays. Enter a [U] in the [S] field next to the appointment you wish to reschedule.

NOTE: When deleting an appointment, ACES will bring up each successive AU ID on the (SCHD) screen. You will have to delete each appointment individually

c. From the (AMEN), select [Y] and enter the AU ID. <TRANSMIT>.

NOTE: This method will only bring up the primary AU, regardless of which AU ID was entered on the (AMEN). If you are trying to delete all appointments for a client, you must use method 1 or 2. The financial assistance AU is the primary AU. If no financial, the medical assistance AU is the primary.

General Information

1. The schedule is set up for appointments on business days only, excluding holidays. Interviews can be scheduled for Saturdays by using the Update function from the CMEN and entering the date. ACES will not bring up a Saturday when using <F13> or <F14>.

2. ACES allows you to block out personal time and schedule client appointments up to twelve weeks in advance. See Section 2 for information on "blocking out your schedule".

3. On approximately the 10th of each month, ACES automatically deletes the previous month's schedule.